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Message Text

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15
ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 OPR-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00

NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CCO-00 USSS-00 SS-20

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01

SPC-03 ACDA-19 IO-14 SCS-03 SCA-01 AF-10 DRC-01 SY-10

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---------- 104159
Z O 151010Z OCT 73 ZFF-4
FM USUNT CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 4017
AMEMBASSY ATHENS NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON NIACT IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 3112

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: AEMR
SUBJECT: ARRANGEMENTS FOR DEPARTURE AMERICAN TOURISTS
FROM CAIRO

REF: STATE 203683; LONDON 11882

1. BENGHAZI BUS ALTERNATIVE STILL LOOKS SLOW AND UNCERTAIN. RUMORS (WHICH THE MAJORITY OF AMERICANS TOURISTS BELIEVE) ARE THAT TOURISTS REACHING BENGHAZI ARE PILING UP AS SPECIAL CONNECTING FLIGHTS FAIL TO MATERIALIZE IN SUFFICIENT NUMBER TO TAKE TOURISTS OF VARIOUS NATIONALITIES OUT OF LIBYA. CONSENSUS OF OPINION AMONG TOURIST AGENCIES AND AMERICAN TOURISTS IS THAT THE BENGHAZI BUS ALTERNATIVE IS STILL FROUGHT WITH FRUSTRATION AND UNCERTAINTY. THIS OPINION SUPPORTED BY FACT THAT 250 OUT OF AN ESTIMATED 350 AMERICAN TOURISTS REMAINING IN EGYPT HAVE SIGNED UP FOR THE S.S. ADONIS SAILING. EVEN IF AMERICAN TOURISTS WANTED TO GO TO BENGHAZI BY BUS, WE CAN SEE PLETHORA TIME-CONSUMING OBSTACLES IF USINT ATTEMPTED A UNILATERAL EFFORT TO CHARTER SUFFICIENT
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TRANSPORTATION TO GET AMERICAN TOURISTS OUT OVERLAND TO

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BENGHAZI.

2. MOVING AMERICAN TOURISTS BY RAIL OR CHARTER BUS TO LUXOR OR ASWAN EXTREMELY DIFFICULT FOR FOLLOWING REASONS:

(A) PHYSICAL. SOME OF REMAINING TOURISTS ARE ELDERLY AND LESS HEARTY THAN THOSE WHO HAVE ALREADY DEPARTED BY BUS TO BENGHAZI. MANY APPEAR TO BE LOSING THEIR STAMINA. THE CONSULAR OFFICER REPORTS INCREASE IN TOURISTS SEEKING MEDICAL ATTENTION.

(B) PSYCHOLOGICAL. MOUNTING UNCERTAINTY ABOUT HOW AND WHEN THEY ARE GETTING OUT OF EGYPT HAS CREATED PSYCHOLOGICAL STRAIN ON AMERICAN TOURISTS. IF THEY ARE TOLD NOW THAT ADONIS NOT SAILING, BUT INSTEAD THEY WILL HAVE TO TAKE LONG RAIL RIDE (CHARTERED BUS NOT WORKABLE FOR MILITARY SECURITY REASONS) TO LUXOR OR ASWAN AND THEN UNCERTAIN AIRLIFT INTO UNKNOWN AFRICA, WE BELIEVE THE REACTION AGAINST USG AND USINT WILL BE QUITE SEVERE. OTHER COUNTRIES ARE GETTING THEIR PEOPLE OUT BY SHIP SUCCESSFULLY AND THE CHORUS ASKING WHY USG CANNOT DO THE SAME IS BECOMING MORE STRIDENT.

(C) LOGISTICAL. ALTHOUGH THE TRAIN APPEARS POSSIBLE BETWEEN CAIRO AND LUXOR OR ASWAN, WE SEE INSURMOUNTABLE HURDLES. LUXOR AIRFIELD HAS BEEN CLOSED TO CIVILIAN AIR TRAFFIC. ASWAN AIRFIELD IS IN A MILITARY ZONE AND IS NOW CLOSED TO CIVILIAN AIR TRAFFIC BECAUSE IT IS BEING USED FOR MILITARY PURPOSES. RATHER THAN TRY TO OPEN LUXOR OR ASWAN AIRFIELDS FOR AN AIRLIFT OF AMERICAN TOURISTS, WE WOULD RATHER TRY TO OPEN CAIRO AIRPORT FOR THIS PURPOSE. HOWEVER, TO BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE NO COMMERCIAL WEST EUROPEAN AIRCRAFT HAVE ARRIVED OR DEPARTED CAIRO AIRPORT SINCE HOSTILITIES BEGAN. OUR CHANCES FOR SUCCESS IN APPROACHING GOE ON THIS SUBJECT APPEAR TO BE NIL AT PRESENT.

3. WE STRONGLY URGE THAT ADONIS SAIL FOR ALEXANDRIA EVENING OCT. 15 TO PERMIT WEDNESDAY DEPARTURE FROM ALEXANDRIA.

4. FOR LONDON: WHY ESPERROS INSTEAD OF ADONIS? ALL CLEARANCES SPECIFIED ADONIS.
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SMITH

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